

UNTITLED

It was all very irrelevant to me. I'm not a farmer. I didn't live during the Great Depression or the years following. I don't grow fruit or pick it for that matter, and I'm not even of Hispanic descent. The dates and strikes and marches are just another group of history facts that I am asked to know and memorize for one reason or another. So far my life and the life and accomplishments of Cesar Chavez have no relation or commonality to bind him to my memory—except for one thing.

Something that I value greatly, that earns my genuine respect and admiration, I found hidden in a comment made about the great and greatly known Cesar Chavez. Actually it was his nephew Rudy Chavez Medina who inadvertently helped me find my way to relate to Cesar Chavez. Rudy came and spoke to us a few days ago about his famous uncle and mentioned offhandedly that his uncle Cesar was never afraid to ask for help. He was not the type to put himself on a pedestal for everyone to worship. When a goal was achieved he didn't credit it to his magnificent leadership. He praised everyone involved, and humbly made himself equal to every individual in the crowd. In a position of such great power I am amazed and in awe that this man could remain so wonderfully humble.

The "equality" of the man staggered me. He had opportunities, as all celebrated leaders do, to leap from poverty into a more comfortable life. But I'm sure he knew that that separation between his life and the lives of the farmers and laborers he inspired would lessen his effectiveness as a leader. So he sacrificed his own comfort for the welfare of the organization, for the thousands who needed his guidance.

They say he is comparable to Gandhi and took his passive resistance techniques from Martin Luther King, Jr. as well. He never put peoples' lives in danger. He wanted only a better world and envisioned achieving that new existence in a peaceful manner. No riots or destruction, only marches and calm demonstrations. Usually human nature turns people to the dark side of things. It is uplifting to learn about someone who wanted only to help and made sure that he didn't hurt anyone in the process.

No facts or figures, just feelings. That is what binds us together and that is what creates a bond in my mind and heart. I never really knew who he was, and the bits and pieces I had grasped had little to do with my life. Now I know who he was and what he did. I know that he was humble to the core and self-sacrificing in all that he did and a truly great man.

"THE LIVES OF WORKERS"

4:00 am
Wake up! Time for work!
Here's a piece of bread and tiny glass of powder milk.
Now go or you'll be late!

5:00 am
Plow. Have to work hard.
Plow. Need to support the family.
Plow. Need to survive.
Plow. Simple.

6:00 am
The sun rises.
Plow. Plan. Need clean water.
Plow. Plant. Pesticides in my lungs.
Plow. Plant. Tired.

7:00 am
The sun grows warm.
Plow. Plan. Lift. Need to rest.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Pesticide grows strong.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Sweat.

8:00 am
The sun is warmer.

The grower comes.
He demands. He orders. He pushes.
He is mad. He gets his way.

9:00 am
The sun gets hot.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Carry. The work is too much.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Carry. I am the pesticide.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Carry. The condition needs to change.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Carry. Sweat and Ache.
THIS TREATMENT HAS TO STOP. WE HAVE TO OVERCOME.
Plow. Plant. Lift. Carry. Six more hours left.

CHAVEZ Y LA CAUSA

Just a man
No more, No less
Victim of intolerance
Who just wanted the best.
For his people
The workers of the field
With words of compensation
For the crops that they yield.
La Causa or The Cause
A movement without fear
It was forged by its people
And it streamed like a tear.
They said it was impossible
Pero si se puede hacer
With hearts filled with determination
Y amor para la mujer.
He carried on for years
Giving only of himself
He did it all for love
And cared nothing for wealth.
His presents was mighty
His movement was strong
And although he is gone
His glory lives on!

A HERO TO THE MEXICAN COMMUNITY
(By: Ester Martinez Estrada)

No words I can write can describe how Cesar Estrada Chavez dedicated his heart and soul to love and justice as we all know. He was a leader that influenced strongly on rights.
A man that went out there and suffered with others day and night.
Cesar Chavez supported nonviolent actions on their part. For he declared, "truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness, is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally nonviolent struggle for justice," and this came from his heart.
Farmworkers gathered in his demonstrations and his strikes to unite the true Mexican pride.
A pride no Mexican can hide.
They came together for the security of justice in peace.
They came together with strength to see their work environment rights to be released.
They came together to rise out of the fields and stand up and never sit 'till they were treated with respect and good pay.
They came together to revise their situation and at least get minimum wage.
Cesar Chavez joined hands with his line of Mexican blood without fear.
Cesar Chavez led the Mexican community hoping their aim and dream was near.
For they all knew that they had to start today for the * * * of the future's eye.
Together and always together they had to rise.
Together they all struggled and prayed.
Together they knew justice would serve one day.
Cesar Chavez and his fellow farmworkers came out of nowhere and bewildered all on their way to their destination.

Without the help of Cesar Chavez, injustice would have gone on for generations.
Cesar died peacefully in his sleep and is now up above.
He symbolized the brown pride and that strength of respectable love.
Now is the time Mexicans can stand proud and say, "My hope is Cesar Estrada Chavez and no one can ask why."

CESAR CHAVEZ

As a young boy, Cesar Estrada Chavez experienced the hardships of being the son of a migrant farm worker. As his family worked in the crops, they learned how to survive in the harsh conditions such as lack of shelter, money, and even food. Racism was also an issue that affected his life. Although his family were third generation Americans, because his ancestors were Mexicans, he was classified as a second-class citizen.

After working with the Community Service Organization from 1952 until 1962, he then moved on to found the National Farm Worker's Association. Under the NFWA, he organized nationwide boycotts of grapes, wine, and lettuce in an attempt to pressure California growers to sign a contract which would increase the farm worker's pay and provide them with a minimum amount of safety, Cesar Chavez became a symbol of hope for the people.

In particular, youth can look up to Cesar Chavez as a role model because it is at this point in our lives that we want to take an active role in mending society's flaws and begin to stand up for what we believe in. However, many of us are unsure of the role we should play and how far we are willing to go to stand by our decisions. As children, we had the vision of making a difference and had dreams of leading a successful life. At this age, reality begins to take its toll and we realize that if we really want to make a difference and lead a successful life there are things which we must do to accomplish these goals. Like Cesar Chavez, we must be willing to put ourselves on the line and uphold our principles and defend our sense of morality.

Cesar Chavez was a man who was not only determined, but courageous as well. "The only way is to keep struggling," he says. "Fighting for social justice is one of the most profound ways in which a man can say yea to man's dignity, and that really means sacrifice. There is no way on this earth in which you can say yes to a man's dignity and know that you're going to be spared some sacrifice."

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA TAX
RELIEF ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. LEWIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1215) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to strengthen the American family and create jobs:

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1215. In taking this position, let me first make it clear that I have consistently supported efforts for real tax relief for our Nation's working citizens and their families.

However, I cannot and will not support this "Reverse Robin Hood" tax relief package that robs from the poor and gives to the rich.

I am also mindful of my duty as a Member of Congress to act in the best interest of the people I represent. That is why I cannot, shirk my responsibility to act in the best interest of all the American people by transferring nearly \$189 billion from programs that help the neediest Americans, to our Nation's most privileged and wealthy Americans. This shortsighted and rushed legislation before us will fail to put a dent in the deficit, but will plunge scores of Americans on the edge of poverty down that slope and decrease the standard of living for this Nation's middle class and working poor.

H.R. 1215 represents the majority's most significant attack on poor and working citizens of this country. It is cynical and repugnant to me that this bill, under the guise of providing tax relief to Americans, seeks to cut: Federal retirement packages; Medicare for our elderly; welfare for innocent children; wages for organized labor; and eliminates or reduces spending on countless other Government programs that help protect our economy, our citizens, and the environment. This flawed and hurried measure should be defeated because it represents a clear attack on the neediest in America.

The stated purpose of H.R. 1215 is to cut taxes for individuals and businesses by \$189 billion. Under this bill, families making up to a quarter of a million dollars a year would receive a tax credit of up to \$500 per child, excluding low-income families who don't make enough to qualify for significant tax cuts. This legislation also contains provisions that significantly reduce the tax on capital gains income, repeal the minimum tax on corporations, and provide businesses with more generous tax loopholes.

While I agree that Congress should look to provide tax relief to all Americans whenever fiscally prudent, the attempt to pit less privileged citizens against our most privileged corporations and citizens is offensive. This legislation goes well beyond its legitimate objective of providing tax relief. In fact, this bill is specifically designed to enrich big businesses and our Nation's wealthiest Americans.

Contrary to the assertions of the Republican supporters of H.R. 1215, 52 percent of the benefits of this so-called tax relief will go to the top 13 percent of taxpayers making over \$100,000 per year. The facts clearly show that the nearly 61-percent of the population that constitutes poor and middle class citizens share of the tax cuts represents only 16 percent of the benefits of tax relief. While I applaud all Americans who have been able to enrich themselves through hard work, innovation, and creativity, I cannot support a tax relief package that so disproportionately benefits the top 13 percent of the American public.

This legislation does not stop at providing huge, disproportionate advantages to rich individuals through tax cuts. H.R. 1215 also exempts some corporations from paying any corporate tax on their profits. By repealing the corporate minimum tax enacted in 1986 designed to assure that profitable companies have to pay some reasonable amount in Federal income taxes, many wealthy corporations will be able to use H.R. 1215's tax loopholes to avoid paying any tax at all.

Prior to the enactment of the 1986 minimum tax, nearly 50 percent of this Nation's wealthiest

and largest corporations were able to pay no Federal income tax. Adoption of this bill will return us to the days when companies profited while citizens paid—AT&T received \$636 million in tax rebates between 1982 and 1985, despite making \$24 billion in pre-tax profits—DuPont supplemented \$3.8 billion in pre-tax profits with \$179 million in tax rebates—General Dynamics benefited for 4 years from 1982 to 1985 by paying no taxes and received a total of \$91 million in tax rebates. Companies like these will be able to enjoy paying no Federal income taxes under the unfair and ill-advised provisions of this tax bill.

In addition to providing tax breaks to America's richest citizens and corporations, this bill also fails to provide meaningful deficit reduction. The fact is, under current law we will enjoy greater future deficit reduction in fiscal years 1999 and 2000 than would be enjoyed if this bill is adopted into law. The cost of the Republican tax cuts will total \$189 billion in the first 5 years and, according to the Treasury Department estimates, that cost will balloon to over \$630 billion by fiscal year 2005. Therefore, by fiscal years 1999 and 2000, deficits under current law would be \$3.8 billion and \$12.4 billion less respectively, than deficits under H.R. 1215. We all agree that deficit reduction in and of itself is a good thing, but as projections show, this Republican legislation simply does not deliver any better deficit reduction than we would experience under current law.

Mr. Chairman, the unfair distribution of the benefits of this bill and its bogus deficit reduction claims were not enough for our colleagues on the other side. They would have us pay for these tax breaks for the rich by mandating a massive \$189 billion in Federal spending reductions in programs serving those who can least afford it.

The largest portion of the spending cuts is characterized in the bill as "general purpose" spending cuts, totaling \$100 billion over the next 5 years. The effects of these proposed cuts will be unmistakable—they will fall on the poorest, the most vulnerable, the most needy of our citizens. They will fall especially hard on the elderly, the disabled, and children.

This assault on the well-being of these individuals is worsened by the transfer of over \$62 billion in welfare funding to finance this tax break for the rich. This action is a cruel and callous attempt to eliminate the most basic income support for desperately needy children and their families. There is no doubt that many of our Nation's poor will suffer under this proposal. Almost 70 percent of the individuals currently receiving benefits, or 9.7 million people, are children. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, it is estimated that more than 6 million children would lose their financial support to finance this tax cut for the rich.

In addition to the \$100 billion in general purpose spending cuts and \$62 billion in welfare cuts, this bill will snatch \$11 billion from Federal employees pensions, and over \$10 billion in Medicare cuts for medical treatment for our elderly.

It is my belief that H.R. 1215, and the circumstances under which it is presented in this House, attempt to mislead the American people to believe that unfair and insensitive solutions will cure what ails this Nation. Nothing could be further from the truth. This legislation unfairly and unjustifiably expands the gap be-

tween rich and poor, and contributes to the impoverishment of our neediest citizens. The American people elected us to act in their best interest, not compromise their welfare because the new Republican majority wants to satisfy campaign promises and grant tax breaks to the rich. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA TAX
RELIEF ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1215) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to strengthen the American family and create jobs:

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, looking at the tax bill we have before us today, I can't help feeling a bit like the proverbial kid in a candy store. The store is full of tempting goodies. But there are two problems. The "goodies" aren't good for me, and I can't afford them.

The bill is loaded wall-to-wall with goodies. It provides a fifty percent exclusion for capital gains. It greatly expands eligibility for Individual Retirement Accounts. It offers needed relief from the alternative minimum tax for corporations trapped in a way never intended when the AMT was designed.

In each of these areas, however, the bill's approach is seriously flawed. The capital gains exclusion will help unlock assets and encourage new investment, especially in venture capital enterprises. But the bill also provides indexing of capital gains, which raises serious complexity problems, and, because the bill indexes only gains and not debt, raises the danger of new tax shelter activities.

The IRA proposal in the bill is designed to limit the revenue losses in the first five years—the so-called budget "window." That concern has led to a proposal for "back-loaded" IRAs. Under traditional IRAs, taxpayers can deduct a contribution, then have earnings accrue on a tax-deferred basis until the funds are withdrawn at retirement.

The American Dream Savings Account invites taxpayers to make non-deductible contributions. That feature may restrict the attractiveness of the proposal. The incentive to contribute to an ADSA IRA is that the initial, after-tax contributions, plus all earnings, accrue tax free forever.

The bill also provides relief to corporations beset by the alternative minimum tax. I strongly support AMT relief for capital intensive corporations. That's why I have introduced H.R. 1092, which would eliminate the depreciation preference from the AMT. Under the regular tax system, we provide accelerated depreciation to encourage companies to modernize and invest in new plant and equipment. Then, under the AMT, we turn around and punish them for acting on the incentive we have provided. It makes no sense.

The problem with this bill is that it goes beyond providing sensible, moderate AMT relief, and completely repeals the corporate AMT.